

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 OES-07 EPA-01 SIL-01 LAB-04

PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 SS-15

SP-02 /068 W

-----026073 020247Z /66

R 011856Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3628

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, GW, SENV

SUBJECT: FIFTH FRG ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM

SUMMARY: THE FIFTH UMWELTFORUM (ENVIRONMENTAL FORUM) WAS

HELD IN BREMEN NOVEMBER 29. THE CENTRAL THEME DISCUSSED

WAS CITIZEN'S INITIATIVES - CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN THE

FRG. APPROXIMATELY 70 REPRESENTATIVES FROM BUERGER-

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INITIATIVEN (BI - CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE/PUBLIC PARTI-

CIPATION GROUPS), INDUSTRY, ACADEMIA, RESEARCH IN-

STITUTES, FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS AS WELL AS

NOTED INDIVIDUALS TOOK PART IN SOMETIMES HEATED DIS-

CUSSIONS ABOUT CITIZEN PARTICIPATION. THE ONE CON-

CENSUS TO EMERGE WAS THAT THESE "CONSULTATIVE SESSIONS"

SHOULD CONTINUE. SPECIFIC STATEMENTS OF INTEREST IN-

CLUDED BBU PRESIDENT SCHUMACHER'S REJECTION OF ANY PLANS TO FORM A BBU POLITICAL PARTY FOR THE TIME BEING, A REJECTION OF THE USE OF VIOLENCE BY BBU GROUPS, AND A CALL FOR TALKS WITH UNIONS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND JOBS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE UMWELTFORUM IS THE CLOSEST ENVIRONMENTAL EQUIVALENT TO THE FRG'S "CONSULTATIVE" TALKS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD. MOST OF THE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS TAKE PLACE IN WORKING GROUPS HELD THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, BUT THE YEARLY UMWELTFORUMS GIVE ALL THE PARTIES INVOLVED (SEE SUMMARY) AN OPPORTUNITY TO AIR THEIR VIEWS. THE FIFTH UMWELTFORUM DISTRIBUTED TWO PAPERS PREPARED BY POLITICAL SCIENTISTS THAT WERE USED AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION (COPIES BEING POUCHED TO DEPARTMENT). ONE PAPER WELCOMED CITIZEN INITIATIVES (BUERGERINITIATIVEN) AS A NEW FORM OF GRASS ROOTS POLITICAL ACTIVISM THAT STRENGTHENED DEMOCRACY IN THE FRG, WHILE THE OTHER PAPER SAW THESE INITIATIVES AS A THREAT TO THE OVERALL GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEM AND SOCIAL ORDER PARTICULARLY IF THE INITIATIVES FRAGMENTED THE EXISTING POLITICAL PARTIES OR CREATED NEW PARTIES A LA THE WEIMAR REPUBLIC. BOTH PAPERS WERE MERELY TAKE OFF POINTS FOR THE DISCUSSIONS THAT FOLLOWED, BUT THE PAPERS WERE USEFUL BECAUSE THEY REFLECTED THE TWO POLITICAL VIEWS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BI'S THAT HAVE EMERGED.

2. ONLY ABOUT ONE QUARTER OF THE DELEGATES WERE FROM THE BI'S AND THEY DID THE BULK OF THE TALKING. THE BI REPRESENTATIVES WERE A SUPERSTAR CAST RANGING FROM THE GRAND OLD MAN OF THE FRG ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT, PASTOR KURT OESER (AIRPORT NOISE OPPONENT INITIALLY), TO THE NEW BOY ON THE STREET, HANS GUENTHER SCHUMACHER (OIL REFINERY OPPONENT INITIALLY), RECENTLY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE BUNDESVERBAND BUERGERINITIATIVEN UMWELTSCHUTZ (BBU - FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF CITIZEN'S INITIATIVES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION).

3. SCHUMACHER MADE A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT POINTS AND CLAIMS IN HIS SPEECH:

- THE BBU HAS DECIDED NOT TO FORM A POLITICAL PARTY FOR THE TIME BEING;
- THE BBU OPPOSES THE USE OF FORCE AS A POLITICAL TOOL;
- THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT IS BECOMING A RUBBER STAMP FOR DECISIONS MADE BY EXPERTS' COMMITTEES IN

SECRET;

-- AN EMPLOYMENT BLACK LIST EXISTS IN THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT PARTICULARLY DIRECTED AGAINST YOUNG
LAWYERS WHO HAVE WORKED FOR BI'S (THIS CLAIM WAS
LATER REFUTED BY INTERIOR MINISTRY STATE SECRETARY
HARTKOPF);
-- RADIO REPORTERS WHO REPORT FAVORABLY ON BI'S, PARTI-

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CULARLY AT WDR IN COLOGNE, ARE PRESSURED BY THEIR
BOSSES;
-- THE BBU IS PREPARING A CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL

PROTECTION AND EMPLOYMENT IN EARLY DECEMBER.

4. IN A CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY LABOFF, SCHUMACHER
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STATED THE BBU HAS NOT BEEN GETTING ANY COOPERATION FROM THE UNION LEADERSHIP. HE HOPED THAT THE TOP UNION LEADERSHIP WOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE BBU'S CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND UNEMPLOYMENT PLANNED FOR THE SECOND WEEKEND IN DECEMBER, BUT HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC. SCHUMACHER NOTED THAT INDIVIDUAL UNION MEMBERS WHO WERE ALSO BBU MEMBERS OR SYMPATHETIC TO THE BBU HAD WORKED WITH THE BBU ON THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION-UNEMPLOYMENT QUESTION AS WELL AS THE ENERGY SUPPLY (READ NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS) - UNEMPLOYMENT QUESTION. LATER A UNION OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS FOR THE DAG TOLD LABOFF THAT HIS UNION FELT BOUND TO PUT THEIR MAJOR EMPHASIS ON UNEMPLOYMENT EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE FAR FROM CERTAIN ABOUT THE REAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, ENERGY AND EMPLOYMENT. HE PERSONALLY HOPED THAT UNION TALKS WITH THE BI'S AND THE BBU WOULD BE POSSIBLE.

5. COMMENT: THE UMWELTFORUM BRINGS TOGETHER LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS FROM DIVERSE AND OFTEN OPPOSING GROUPS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL AREA. AS SUCH IT PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE (PARTICULARLY IN ITS WORKING GROUPS) IN CONSENSUS BUILDING AND IN THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL COMPROMISES. THE BBU SEEMS UNREADY TO MAKE THE JUMP TO POLITICAL PARTY STATUS NOW, BUT THAT WILL REMAIN AN ACTIVE IDEA THAT CAN BE USED IN THE FUTURE BOTH AS A BARGAINING CHIP IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL PARTIES AND AS A PUBLICITY PLOY. THE BBU IS GOING THROUGH A SELF-EVALUATION PERIOD AS TO WHAT IT SHOULD BE ORGANIZATIONALLY, WHAT ITS GOALS SHOULD BE AND THE MEANS IT SHOULD USE TO OBTAIN THESE GOALS. THIS SELF-EVALUATION WILL PROVIDE A GREAT DEAL OF GRIST FOR POLITICAL COMMENTATORS AND ANALYSTS. THE UNIONS
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ARE UNLIKELY TO ACCEPT THE BBU'S INVITATIONS FOR THE CONSULTATIONS IN DECEMBER. HOWEVER, BY NEXT FALL IT IS LIKELY THAT THE UNIONS WILL BE MORE PROMINENTLY REPRESENTED IN THE UMWELTFORUM ALONG WITH INDUSTRY, ACADEMIC AND BBU REPRESENTATIVES.
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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TAGS: ELAB, SENV, GE
To: STATE
Type: TE
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